

away from themselves as problem solvers for themselves. As a result, they become dependent, and when they become dependent, they become less free. That is what this debate is all about.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I actually promised my colleague from Illinois that I would limit my response to 5 minutes, but I am so moved by what my colleague from Texas had to say, I would like to respond.

Mr. President, I hardly know where to start, but I can assure my colleague that it is quite possible to turn toward God and to turn toward religion and to have values and spirituality in your life and believe, as the Committee on Economic Development believed, a business organization which issued a report a few years ago, that one of the ways that we do well with an effective, successful private sector is to make sure that we invest in our children when they are young.

It is simply the case that if we do not invest in our children when they are young, making sure that each and every child has that equality of opportunity, which is what my parents taught me was what America was all about, then we pay the interest later on with high rates of illiteracy and dropout and drug addiction and crime and all of the rest.

Mr. President, when we talk about will there be a higher minimum wage, the answer from my colleague from Texas is no. From what I think I just heard my colleague say, when we talk about whether or not higher education will be affordable, for some sort of reason there is nothing the Government can do, we do not really need to have Pell grants or low-interest loans or work study, but, Mr. President, what has made this country a greater country is to make sure that each and every young person has that opportunity.

Nobody talked about the Government doing everything. That is a caricature. That is just sort of political debate.

We have a strong private sector, and that is what makes this country go round, but we also think there is a role for the public sector, and that is to make sure that we live up to the promise of this Nation, which is equality of opportunity.

I do not think the people in the United States of America believe that whether or not you receive adequate health care or not should be based upon whether or not you have an income. I think people believe that each and every citizen ought to have decent health care. I heard my colleague criticize the post office. I can tell you one thing, at least they do not deliver mail according to your income. Everybody gets their mail regardless of their income.

I heard my colleague talk about welfare. My God, you would think AFDC families caused the debt, caused the

deficit. I was not here during the years some of my colleague served here, but if my memory serves me correctly, in the early 1980's, we were told what you want to do is dramatically reduce taxes—that was euphemistically called—I ask my colleague from Illinois, I think I am correct—the Economic Recovery Act. What happened was we eroded the revenue base and moved away from any principle of progressivity, I say to my colleague. I am sorry he is not here.

Poor people do pay taxes. Many people are poor in the United States of America, work 40 hours a week, if not more, 52 weeks a year, and they pay Social Security taxes. More wage earners, more ordinary Americans pay more in Social Security taxes than in taxes. We have dramatically reduced the corporate rates and, indeed, there has been too much of a pressure on middle-income and working families. But this argument that the problem is that we have relied too much on an income tax just simply does not hold up by any kind of standard if you look at it with any rigor.

I think the welfare benefits, the AFDC benefits in some States—I cannot remember Texas—are about 20 percent of poverty. People in the United States of America believe the children have a right to be all that they can be. People in the United States of America believe we should invest in higher education. People in the United States of America believe that an educated, high-morale work force is critical to economic performance. And people in the United States of America believe that it is a combination of a strong private sector and also a Government that can effect good public policy that can lead to the improvement of lives of people in our communities that makes the difference. That is what this debate is about.

I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

BATTLE AGAINST POVERTY

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, I will try not to strain the patience of my colleague from Washington.

First, in response to the dialog that has just taken place between the Senator from Texas and the Senator from Minnesota, the Government clearly is not the answer for all of our problems. But I would point out that when we had what was called a war on poverty—which was really not a war on poverty, but at least a battle against poverty—we ended up at one point with 16 percent of the children of America living in poverty, down from 23 percent. We are now back up to 23 percent, and we ought to do better. That is Government policy, it is private sector, it is all of us working together.

PEACEKEEPING CONTRIBUTION

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, Sunday's New York Times has an article entitled "Poll Finds American Support for Peacekeeping by U.N.," written by Barbara Crossette. It is a poll conducted of 1,204 people by the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland and by the Independent Center for the Study of Policy Attitudes in Washington.

Let me just read a couple of paragraphs:

There was a general perception among those polled that about 40 percent of United Nations peacekeeping troops are American, and that this should be halved to 20 percent. In fact, 4 percent of peacekeepers are American.

I do not know where the 4 percent figure in the Times comes from. The last figure I saw was as of March 6 and at that point, the United States was No. 20 in its contribution and less than 4 percent. Jordan, with 3 million people, was contributing more than twice as many peacekeepers as the United States with 250 million people. Nepal was ahead of us at that point.

The article also says:

Asked about the cost of the Federal budget of international peacekeeping, half of the sample in the poll gave a median estimate of 22 percent. Less than 1 percent of the military budget is actually spent on these operations . . .

Mr. President, we do have a choice here, and that is whether we are going to work with those countries or whether we are not. To use the old overworked phrase, if the United States is not going to be the policeman of the world, we have to work with other countries.

Here let me add that one of the things that we get all emotionally hung up about is whether U.S. troops can be under a non-U.S. commander. The reality is that back since George Washington had troops under a French commander, we have had troops under foreign commanders. I do not know why we get so hung up on this. It does not bother me, frankly, if the next NATO commander should be a Canadian, or a Brit, or an Italian, or one of the other NATO countries. I think that is a perfectly plausible thing.

If we want other countries to work with us around the world, we will, on occasion, have to have American troops under foreign commanders.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the New York Times article.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 30, 1995]

POLL FINDS AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR
PEACEKEEPING BY THE UNITED NATIONS

(By Barbara Crossette)

UNITED NATIONS, April 28.—As Congress considers making significant cuts in contributions to United Nations peacekeeping, the findings of a new study show that Americans may not only be supportive of such operations but are also willing to see missions

become more aggressive, even when Americans are involved.

The study also found that about 80 percent of those questioned believed that the United Nations had the responsibility to intervene in conflicts marked by genocide. But Americans in the poll and in group discussions indicated that they knew little about the extent and cost of United States participation in peacekeeping.

There was a general perception among those polled that about 40 percent of United Nations peacekeeping troops are American, and that this should be halved to 20 percent. In fact, 4 percent of peacekeepers are American. The absence of television reporting of operations that do not have a substantial American involvement may at least in part explain this misperception.

Asked about the cost to the Federal budget of international peacekeeping, half of the sample in the poll gave a median estimate of 22 percent. Less than 1 percent of the military budget is actually spent on these operations, although Washington is assessed 31 percent of the costs of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Total costs amount to about \$2 billion, the assessment plus supplemental costs, of the \$270 billion Federal military budget.

The study was based on a poll conducted by the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland and by the independent Center for the Study of Policy Attitudes in Washington.

The results of the study did show some "softening" in support for peacekeeping generally, said Steven Kull, of the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the center. A little more than a year ago, 84 percent of those polled indicated strong support for United Nations peacekeeping. This year, that figure was 67 percent.

But 89 percent of the people polled said that when there was a problem requiring military force, it was best for the United States to work with other countries and the United Nations in dealing with it.

The study questioned 1,204 people through a method known as a random-digit-dial sample, with a margin or error of 3 to 4 percentage points. It also drew on focus-group discussions in Maryland, Michigan, New Mexico and Virginia.

At the Heritage Foundation in Washington, Larry DiRita, deputy director for foreign policy and defense, expressed skepticism of polls that ask about issues like peacekeeping in very broad terms.

"The American people are basically very generous and want to do good," he said in an interview, adding that citizens are quick to respond when faced with images of starvation, violence and displacement. But he said he believed that this changes markedly when people are presented with concrete choices about sending Americans into one dangerous situation or another, especially when they have seen disturbing images on television.

"A general American optimism comes out in polls," he said. "But when faced with reality, they take a more skeptical view."

In the questioning and discussions, a majority of people voiced frustration with the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and suggested that it eroded the long-term reputation of the United Nations. Mr. Kull said a focus-group comment that "the United Nations has no clout" seemed to reflect the widespread sense that the real problem with peacekeeping was its ineffectiveness.

WAS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, more than 3 years ago I began making daily

reports to the Senate making a matter of record the exact Federal debt as of the close of business the previous day.

As of the close of business Friday, April 28, the exact Federal debt stood at \$4,852,327,350,096.60, meaning that on a per capita basis, every man, woman, and child in America owes \$18,419.52 as his or her share of the Federal debt.

It is important to note, Mr. President, that the United States had an opportunity to begin controlling the Federal debt by implementing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Unfortunately, the Senate did not seize their first opportunity to control this debt—but rest assured they will have another chance during the 104th Congress.

If Senators do not concentrate on getting a handle on this enormous debt, the voters are not likely to overlook it next year.

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM'S WORK IN OKLAHOMA CITY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to praise the members of the Montgomery County Maryland Search and Rescue Team for their work in Oklahoma City. This team worked among the death and destruction of Oklahoma City, driven by the hope that they would find another survivor within the tons of debris of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

I cannot stress the gratitude that I feel as the Senator for Maryland to this group of dedicated heroes, who worked 12 hours a day, for days on end, in their search for survivors. This group concentrated on search and rescue, ignoring the danger of falling debris and the mental agony of this tragedy.

Mr. President, I feel the dedication this team and others like it displayed in Oklahoma City exemplifies the American spirit, a spirit of helping those in need to overcome a crisis. The brave men and women of the Montgomery County Search and Rescue Team placed their lives on the line for their fellow Americans; this is nothing less than an act of heroism.

The Montgomery County team worked at the center of the blast zone of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building by shoring up and removing giant slabs of concrete as members of the Oklahoma City Fire Department removed bodies. Working at the center of the blast zone, at ground zero, was dangerous duty. I know that I speak for all of my colleagues as I recognize this Montgomery County team because they were an example of the many dedicated Americans who came from all across the Nation to lend a helping hand in the wake of this disaster.

Mr. President, I conclude my remarks today by passing along to the Montgomery County Search and Rescue Team a much deserved thank you for a job well done. Thank you for restoring the notion that the American

spirit is still alive and well. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMMONSENSE PRODUCT LIABILITY AND LEGAL REFORM ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of H.R. 956, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 956) to establish legal standards and procedures for product liability litigation, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

(1) Gorton amendment No. 596, in the nature of a substitute.

(2) McConnell amendment No. 603 (to amendment No. 596) to reform the health care liability system and improve health care quality through the establishment of quality assurance programs.

(3) Thomas amendment No. 604 (to amendment No. 603) to provide for the consideration of health care liability claims relating to certain obstetric services.

(4) Wellstone amendment No. 605 (to amendment No. 603) to revise provisions regarding reports on medical malpractice data and access to certain information.

(5) Snowe amendment No. 608 (to amendment No. 603) to limit the amount of punitive damages that may be awarded in a health care liability action.

(6) Kyl amendment No. 609 (to amendment No. 603) to provide for full compensation for noneconomic losses in civil actions.

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, the balance of the day will be used to debate the McConnell amendment which proposes to add detailed provisions with respect to medical malpractice legislation to the substitute which is currently before the Senate, primarily on the subject of product liability.

All amendments, except for leadership amendments, that deal with medical malpractice under the order are to be offered today and debated throughout the day. There will also be approximately 1 hour for debate on all of those amendments tomorrow before 11 o'clock in the morning, when there will be votes on everything leading up to and including the McConnell amendment, after which time, with certain narrow exceptions, medical malpractice will no longer be discussed as a part of this bill.

So I want to express the hope that Members who wish to speak on the subject of medical malpractice or to offer additional amendments to the McConnell amendment will come to the floor and debate those issues today. Nothing in the order prohibits speeches or discussions on the legislation broader than medical malpractice, but this is